

# SBH SCHOOL TIPS

## 8 WAYS A CHILD'S ANXIETY SHOWS UP AS SOMETHING ELSE



- 1. Anger** – The perception of anger, stress or opposition is enough to trigger the fight or flight response leaving your child angry and without a way to communicate why.
- 2. Difficulty Sleeping** – In children, having difficulty falling asleep or staying asleep is one of the hallmark characteristics of anxiety.
- 3. Defiance** – Unable to communicate what is really going on, it is easy to interpret the child's defiance as a lack of discipline instead of an attempt to control a situation where they feel anxious and helpless.
- 4. Chandeliering** – Chandeliering is when a seemingly calm person suddenly flies off the handle for no reason. They have pushed hurt and anxiety so deep for so long that a seemingly innocent comment or event suddenly sends them straight through the chandelier.
- 5. Lack of Focus** – Children with anxiety are often so caught up with their own thoughts that they do not pay attention to what is going on around them.
- 6. Avoidance** – Children who are trying to avoid a particular person, place or task often end up experiencing whatever they are avoiding.
- 7. Negativity** – People with anxiety tend to experience negative thoughts at a much greater intensity than positive ones.
- 8. Overplanning** – Overplanning and defiance go hand in hand in their root cause. Where anxiety can cause some children to try to take back control through defiant behaviour, it can cause others to overplan for situations where planning is minimal or unnecessary.

### Zones of Regulation: How does it help your students in the classroom?

The Zones is a systematic, cognitive behavioural approach used to teach self-regulation by categorising all the different ways we feel and states of alertness we experience into four concrete coloured zones. The Zones framework provides strategies to teach students to become more aware of and independent in controlling their emotions and impulses, manage their sensory needs, and improve their ability to problem solve conflicts.

The Zones can be compared to traffic signs. When given a green light or in the Green Zone, one is "good to go". A yellow sign means be aware or take caution, which applies to the Yellow Zone. A red light or stop sign means stop, and when one is in the Red Zone this often is the case. The Blue Zone can be compared to the rest area signs where one goes to rest or reset.

The **Red Zone** is used to describe extremely heightened states of alertness and intense emotions. A student may be elated or experiencing anger, rage, devastation, or terror when in the Red Zone.

The **Yellow Zone** is also used to describe a heightened state of alertness and elevated emotions; however, one has more control when they are in the Yellow Zone. A student may be experiencing stress, frustration, anxiety, excitement, silliness, the wiggles, or nervousness when in the Yellow Zone.

The **Green Zone** is used to describe a calm state of alertness. A student may be described as happy, focused, content, or ready to learn when in the Green Zone. This is the zone where optimal learning occurs.

The **Blue Zone** is used to describe low states of alertness and down feelings such as when one feels sad, tired, sick, or bored.

For more information <http://www.zonesofregulation.com/>

### What is a Positive Behaviour Support Plan

A Positive Behaviour Plan details strategy recommended to deal with difficult or inappropriate behaviours. There is no magic wand for changing the behaviour, but when developed carefully a positive behaviour support plan provides a very effective response to an individual's behaviour. An understanding of the person (likes/dislikes, unique learning characteristics, skills and abilities) combined with an understanding of the reasons the person uses particular behaviour are the key to developing an effective Positive Behaviour Support Plan.

The information is used to select a number of strategies designed to:

- prevent the behaviour
- teach alternative behaviours
- motivate behaviour change
- manage the situation if the behaviour does occur.

Developing a Positive Behaviour Support Plan involves gathering important information, answering a number of questions, making some decisions, putting the ideas into practice and making any adjustments as needed. It is suggested that this process be completed as a team, so the plan has a holistic view of the student.

The following questions provide some information detailing the necessary steps for developing the Positive Behaviour Support Plan.

- What do you know about the student?
- What is the problem?
- Why is the behaviour occurring?
- What changes to the environment will help **prevent** the behaviour?
- What skills can we teach the student to use instead of the behaviour?
- How can the team encourage the desired behaviour and how can the inappropriate behaviour be discouraged?
- What should we do if the problem behaviour occurs?

#### Strategies for teaching self-regulation:

- Choose strategies, programs and the level of support that are age-appropriate for the student.
- Use visual supports (e.g. diagrams/visual reminders/choice boards).
- Teach concepts of self-regulation and practice when the student is calm.
- Use self-regulation language and concepts consistently in all the student's settings.
- Motivate and reward the student for trying to use self-regulation strategies.
- Set the student up for success by exploring any other reasons for the student's difficulty with self-regulation.